

REMARKS

Claims 1-66 are currently pending. Claims 61-63 have been newly added. Applicant reserves the right to pursue original and other claims in this and other applications.

Claims 1-5, 7-13, 17-18, 22-25, 27-29, 42, and 46-48 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as being unpatentable over Towler et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,697,277) ("Towler"). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 recites, inter alia, "a **test circuit for testing** a match detection circuit, said test circuit comprising: a test line for providing a load to the match detection circuit, said test line being switchably coupled to a first line of the match detection circuit to provide the load on the first line and to test a feature of the match detection circuit." (emphasis added)

Towler discloses "a match line circuit in a content addressable memory (CAM) has a match line coupled to a first pull-up device and a first pull-down device at a match node." (Towler, abstract) Towler is directed to "determining a desired operating impedance for a computer memory circuit." (Towler, Col. 2, L. 23-25)

Towler fails to disclose "a **test circuit for testing** a match detection circuit." Additionally, Towler fails to disclose a "test line being switchably coupled to a first line of the match detection circuit to provide the load on the first line and to **test** a feature of the match detection circuit." (Emphasis added) As highlighted in the claims, the claimed invention and the invention of Towler are directed at different aspects of memory: testing versus operating. and have different features. As such, the rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-5 and 7-11 depend from claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1 noted above.

Independent claims 12, 22, and 42 have similar limitations and are allowable for at least the reasons noted above with respect to claim 1.

Claim 13, 17-18; 23-25, 27-29; 46-48 depend from claims 12, 22, and 42, respectfully, and are allowable for at least the reasons note above with respect to claim 1.

Claims 6, 14, 15, 16, 19-21, 26, 30-41, 43-45, and 49-60 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Towler. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 6, 14, 15, 16, 19-21, 26, 30-41, 43-45, and 49-60 have similar limitations as claim 1 and are allowable for at least the reasons note above with respect to claim 1.

Additionally, with respect to claims 6 and 14, Towler fails to disclose a "load is a resistor," as noted by the Office Action ("Towler does not teaches (sic) using a resistor for pull-up impedance", Office Action p. 5). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection: the Patent Office has simply made a conclusionary statement ("it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the data processing art at the time of the invention was made to modify the teachings of Towler by using the resistor for pull-up impedance") and has not identified any support thereof.

Applicant would similarly traverse claims 30-31 which have similar limitations as claims 6, 14.

Additionally, claims 32, 35, 38, 41, and 57, disclose a test circuit coupled to a discharge line or test a discharge line. The circuit of Towler, to the contrary, is coupled to the Matchline. Thus claims 32, 35, 38, 41, and 57, and their respective dependant claims are also allowable for that reason.

Claims 61-66 have been added which have similar limitations as claim 1 and are allowable for at least the same reasons noted above with respect to claim 1.

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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